

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 PM-05 SS-15 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
MCE-00 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 L-03 EB-08 HA-05 SSO-00
NSCE-00 INRE-00 ICAE-00 ISO-00 /073 R

DRAFTED BY EA/K:DBLAKEMORE:LKD
APPROVED BY EA: WHGLEYSTEN, JR.

EA/K: MR. RICH

PM/ISP: RJONES

DOD/ISA: LTC MCCLURE

S/P: AROMBERG

S:

JCS: COL. MURANE

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O P 150044Z JUN 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

CINCUNC IMMEDIATE

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII PRIORITY 0541

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY 0500

JCS WASHDC PRIORITY 0416

S E C R E T STATE 151842

JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: MASS, KS

SUBJECT: F-16S FOR KOREA

1. AS THE ADDRESSEES ARE AWARE, A FORMAL ROKG REQUEST FOR
AN LOA COVERING 60 F-16 AIRCRAFT HAS BEEN PENDING SINCE
EARLY 1977. IN JULY 1977 SECRETARY BROWN TOLD THE KOREANS
THAT IN PRINCIPLE WE ARE PREPARED TO MAKE THE F-16 AVAILABLE,
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BUT TIMING WAS NOT ADDRESSED.

2. IN SEPTEMBER 1977 FORMAL PROCESSING OF THE LOA REQUEST
BEGAN; THE QUESTION OF HOW TO RESPOND TO THE LOA EVENTUALLY
BECAME THE SUBJECT OF A FULL INTER-AGENCY REVIEW AIMED AT
ULTIMATE DECISION AT THE CABINET LEVEL. SIX POSSIBLE RES-
PONSES WERE OUTLINED IN THE DECISION MEMORANDUM, BRIEFLY

SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

(A) REVERSE THE EARLIER AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE F-16S AND SUGGEST THAT INSTEAD THE ROKG ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL F-4S OR F-5ES;

(B) DECLINE TO PROCESS THE LOA NOW AND AVOID ANY RESTATEMENT OF OUR EARLIER AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE;

(C) DECLINE TO PROCESS THE LOA NOW, BUT REAFFIRM OUR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE;

(D) AGREE TO PROCESS THE LOA AFTER CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE TRANSFER LEGISLATION;

(E) APPROVE THE SALE OF 18 AIRCRAFT NOW AND CONSIDER A FURTHER SALE LATER;

(F) APPROVE THE FULL REQUEST FOR 60 AIRCRAFT NOW.

3. AFTER EXTENDED DELIBERATION, INCLUDING CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN SECRETARIES VANCE AND BROWN, OPTION C WAS DECIDED UPON ON JUNE 5. NO DECISION WAS MADE REGARDING WHEN THE LOA WILL BE ACTED UPON, BUT THE TIMING OF FURTHER PROCESSING WILL CLEARLY HAVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES. BEGIN FYI: WE UNDERSTAND THAT IF A LETTER OF OFFER WERE SIGNED BEFORE APRIL 1, 1979 INITIAL DELIVERY OF THE AIRCRAFT
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COULD OCCUR IN 1982. END FYI.

4. WE THINK IT IS LIKELY THAT, GIVEN PUBLICIZED PROBLEMS WITH KOREA IN THE INTERVENING PERIOD AND THE DELAY IN RESPONDING TO THE LOA REQUEST, THE ROKG HAS BEEN WORRIED ABOUT WHETHER OUR COMMITMENT IN PRINCIPLE STILL STANDS. THUS, WHILE THE DECISION CONTAINS NOTHING NEW, IT SHOULD NONETHELESS BE WELCOME NEWS. THEREFORE, WHILE THIS ROK CONCERN IS LIKELY TO ARISE AT THE SCM, AND WE WILL OF COURSE BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS IT, WE BELIEVE THAT OUR DECISION SHOULD BE CONVEYED TO THE ROKG IN ADVANCE OF THAT MEETING.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: THE EMBASSY SHOULD CONVEY TO THE ROKG AT AN APPROPRIATELY HIGH LEVEL THAT OUR COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE THIS AIRCRAFT, MADE BY SECRETARY BROWN LAST JULY, HAS NOW BEEN REAFFIRMED. WE ARE NOT PREPARED, HOWEVER, TO ISSUE AN LOA AT THIS TIME. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, MILITARY SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE151842
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DBLAKEMORE:LKD
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780249-0411
Format: TEL
From: STATE JOINT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780655/aaaabvht.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 06876088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2336666
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: F-16S FOR KOREA
TAGS: MASS, KS
To: SEOUL CINCUNC
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/06876088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014